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FORTHCOMING BOOKS.

Hon. W. W. Merritt, of Red Oak, Iowa, has been for sometime engaged in collecting materials for the History of Montgomery County. Some preliminary steps have been taken to show what the work will be when it is issued a few months hence. We have read some of the advance sheets, and have examined a model of the book, which is intended to show the quality of the work both of the author and publishers. So far as we can now judge, this will be the best county history that has yet appeared in our State. Mr. Merritt, who has resided in the county since 1857, has labored long and earnestly in collecting his materials. Of most of the facts he has been personally cognizant—"all of which he saw, and part of which he was." He possesses the ability and the culture which enable him to make the best use of his materials. His style is pleasing and he manifests a degree of discrimination and impartiality which will make his labors permanently valuable. So far as the printing and binding are concerned, it is only necessary to state that they are the work of the Thomas D. Murphy Company of Red Oak, who rank with the most tasteful publishers in the United States. We have had a marked advance in the quality of Iowa county histories during the past decade, but we do not doubt that in point of real excellence this will lead them all. One single feature will go far towards convincing the reader that this will be a genuine, praiseworthy book of Iowa history, and that is the fact that while it will contain 100 fine portraits, these will be placed within its pages upon the judgment of the author and publishers and no payment will be sought or exacted for their publication. Only those—largely the pioneer settlers—will be thus honored who deserve this distinction in the annals of Montgomery county. The man who gets into books by paying liberally for his portrait has been eliminated. The work is going through the press under most favorable auspices.

Mrs. Ona Ellis Smith, of Guthrie Center, has written "A Child's History of Iowa," which she hopes to see largely used in the schools of this State. The manuscript is still in her possession, and has not yet been in the hands of any "reader" for publication. We hear, however, that it has been examined by persons qualified to judge of its merits and that it has met with their hearty commendation. Mrs. Smith has worked long and earnestly to produce a good book and we trust her efforts will meet with success. There is abundant room for such a work.

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